

**MINUTES of the Finance Committee Meeting of Melksham Without Parish Council held on Monday 8th June 2015 at Crown Chambers, Market Place, Melksham at 8.15pm**

**Present:** Cllrs John Glover (Chair); Alan Baines (Vice Chair), Richard Wood, Rolf Brindle, Mike Mills and Pat Nicol.

Cllr Mike Sankey attended for part of the meeting as an observer and took no part in voting.

- 056/15 **Declarations of Interest:** Cllr Glover declared an interest in Melksham & District Girl Guides and Melksham Railway Development Group. Cllr Baines declared an interest in Melksham Christmas Lights as a volunteer. Cllr Wood declared an interest in Berryfield and Semington Road Action Group (BASRAG) and Bowerhill Village Hall. Cllr Brindle declared an interest in Bowerhill Village Hall and Melksham Railway Development Group. Cllr Mills declared an interest in Bowerhill Village Hall, Bowerhill Residents Action Group (BRAG) and Melksham Gardeners' Society. The Clerk declared an interest in Melksham & District Girl Guides, Melksham Party in the Park, Melksham Country Dancers and Melksham Gardeners Society.
- 057/15 **Public Participation:** There were no members of the public present at the meeting
- 058/15 **Minutes of Finance Committee 18<sup>th</sup> May 2015:** The draft minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2015 were noted.
- 059/15 **Asset Register:** The Finance Assistant explained that the asset register is now set up to track changes to assets owned (eg purchase of new asset). Cllr Baines queried details listed about the RAF gate badge and commemorative stone. **Recommended:** *The register is updated to amend the dates and values of these assets.*
- 060/15 **Council Insurance Cover Renewal :** It was noted that the insurance policy had been renewed to include the new pavilion at Bowerhill with the exclusions as previously agreed by the finance committee. The premium for 2015/16 was £4,239.72.

The Committee noted the 'notes from the Came & Co presentation at the SLCC branch meeting'. A number of actions were suggested including the need for more risk assessments, further policies & procedures and the importance of the public being encouraged to report problems with assets (eg play areas and sports field) as well as the regular inspections by the Parish Caretaker. **Recommended:** *The Clerk acts on the advice from the presentation so the insurance company is in the best position possible to defend the Council in case of a claim against it.*

- 061/15 **Short Term Investment procedure:** The Clerk explained that in the long term the investment procedure would depend on the bank account set up and options with the different banking institutions. Until this is agreed, it is possible to gain more interest on funds by putting them in a fixed term deposit account for a longer period than 4-5 weeks as per current procedures. **Recommended:** *The officers manage the Councils funds to maximize interest leaving a surplus of £5,000 in the business account (in addition to sums already allocated) in case of unplanned expenditure.*
- 062/15 **Grant Applications 2015/16:** The Chairman reported that 37 grant applications had been received totaling £24,982. The 2015/16 budget included £14,250 for grants: £7,500 for Sections 137 grants, £6,250 for Village Halls grants and £500 for other grants.
1. **Bowerhill Village Hall Trust:**  
**Recommended:** *The Council award a grant of £2,650*
  2. **Shaw Hill Playing Field and Village Hall:**  
**Recommended:** *The Council award a grant of £3,450*
  3. **Berryfield Village Hall:**  
**Recommended:** *The Council award a grant of £500*
  4. **Whitley Reading Rooms:**  
**Recommended:** *The Council award a grant of £500*
  5. **The Rachel Fowler Centre:**  
**Recommended:** *The Council award a grant of £200*
  6. **Melksham Riverside Club:**  
**Recommended:** *The Council award a grant of £200*
  7. **Bowerhill Residents Action Group (BRAG):**  
**Recommended:** *The Council award a grant of £400*
  8. **Berryfield & Semington Road Action Group (BASRAG):**  
**Recommended:** *The Council award a grant of £400*
  9. **Community Action Whitley Shaw (CAWS):** It was noted that the Council had already provided £300 to assist with the set up of the group for meeting room hire, printing, and fundraising/publicity events and the Council's insurance policy had covered the group for Public Liability cover until now.  
**Recommended:** *The Council award a grant of £250. The accompanying letter states that this funding is to pay for Public Liability Insurance and is in line with funding for other action groups; litter picking*

equipment is available for use from Wiltshire Council; and monies are currently available from other sources eg Melksham Charities.

**10. Melksham & District Girl Guides:**

*Recommended: The Council award a grant of £300*

**11. Shaw & Whitley Toddler Group:**

*Recommended: The Council award a grant of £200*

**12. Happy Circle Day Centre:**

*Recommended: The Council award a grant of £100*

**13. Group Five:**

*Recommended: The Council award a grant of £300*

**14. Melksham PHAB Club:**

*Recommended: The Council award a grant of £250*

**15. Relate Mid Wiltshire:**

*Recommended: The Council refuses this application on the grounds that there are sufficient funds in their accounts.*

**16. Melksham Community Bus:**

*Recommended: The Council refuses this application on the grounds that there are sufficient funds in their accounts.*

**17. Ludlow Hewitt Sheltered Housing:**

*Recommended: The Council award a grant of £100*

**18. Melksham Food Bank**

*Recommended: The Council award a grant of £100*

**19. Wiltshire Mind:**

*Recommended: The Council award a grant of £100*

**20. Melksham & District Seniors 55+:**

*Recommended: The Council award a grant of £100*

**21. Melksham Christmas Lights:**

*Recommended: The Council award a grant of £250*

**22. Melksham Party in the Park:**

*Recommended: The Council award a grant of £150*

**23. Melksham Carnival:**

*Recommended: The Council award a grant of £100*

**24. Melksham Shed:** The Clerk reported that she had already made contact with Wiltshire Council about providing highway plainings for the base of the new building. **Recommended:** *The Council award a grant of £100. The accompanying letter advises the group to contact Forest & Sandridge School regarding redundant portacabins.*

**25. Bowerhill Villager:**

**Recommended:** *The Council award a grant of £250. The accompanying letter advises the committee to contact Shaw & Whitley Connect to find out about maximizing advertising revenue and producing a professional looking magazine cost effectively.*

**26. Shaw & Whitley Connect:**

**Recommended:** *The Council award a grant of £250*

**27. Shaw & Whitley Parish Church:**

**Recommended:** *The Council award a grant of £150. The accompanying letter states that the funds are to benefit facilities for community use and should not be given to other charities or groups.*

**28. Melksham Railway Development Group:**

**Recommended:** *The Council award a grant of £200*

**29. Beanacre & Melksham Cricket Club:**

**Recommended:** *The Council refuses this application on the grounds that the accounts were insufficient and there is concern about the location of the new equipment as St. Barnabas Church already has an oven and microwave.*

**30. AFC Melksham (Disabled):**

**Recommended:** *The Council award a grant of £250*

**31. Cloth Road Arts Group:**

**Recommended:** *The Council refuses this application on the grounds that the application does not clearly demonstrate a benefit to enough residents of Melksham Without.*

**32. Melksham Choral Society:**

**Recommended:** *The Council award a grant of £100*

**33. Melksham Country Dancers:**

**Recommended:** *The Council award a grant of £100*

**34. Melksham Gardeners Society:**

**Recommended:** *The Council award a grant of £200*

**35. Enigma:**

*Recommended: The Council award a grant of £100*

**36. Melksham Amateur Swimming Club:**

*Recommended: The Council award a grant of £200*

**37. Melksham Tourist Information Centre:**

*Recommended: The Council award a grant of £500*

**TOTAL GRANTS ALLOCATED: £13,000**

063/15 **Correspondence from Wilts & Berks Canal:** The Council noted this correspondence but were not in a position to give support for the application to Melksham Town Council for their event as they requested.

064/15 **2015/16 Subscriptions:**

*Recommended: The Council formally approve payment of the following annual subscriptions:*

<i>Society of Local Council Clerks</i>	<i>£170</i>
<i>Wilts &amp; Berks Canal Trust</i>	<i>£25</i>
<i>CPRE</i>	<i>£36</i>
<i>Community First</i>	<i>£36</i>
<i>Local Council Review</i>	<i>£40</i>
<i>Clerks &amp; Councils Direct</i>	<i>£12</i>
<i>Fields in Trust</i>	<i>£30</i>
<i>Open Spaces Society</i>	<i>£45</i>

065/15 **Correspondence from WALC:** The Council considered this correspondence but did not wish to resubscribe as its membership of the SLCC and subscription to Clerks & Councils direct and the "Local Council Review" published by WALC are proving sufficient.

*The Committee suspended Standing Order 1, to allow the meeting to continue after 10pm.*

066/15 **Requests for expenditure / funding:**

**a) CATG (Community Area Transport Group) requests:**

**i. Crossing at Bowerhill Industrial Estate (Valldata):** *Recommended: The Council refuses this request on the grounds that Valldata is not contributing to this crossing despite its main use being for its employees and that the new Portal Road would reduce traffic in this area.*

**ii. Dropped kerbs in Whitley:** Cllr Glover reported that the CATG had requested evidence of the need for dropped kerbs at the Corsham / Middle Lane junction in Whitley in support of the Parish Council's

request. The Clerk reported that this would amount to a contribution of £750. Cllr Baines reported that he had reviewed the site and surrounding area and advised that 3 pairs of dropped kerbs would be needed to allow Whitley residents with mobility scooters to navigate the route into town. At a cost of approximately £750 per pair of dropped kerbs, the 1/3 contribution to the scheme that the CATG would be looking to the Parish Council to fund would therefore be approximately £750.

**Recommended:** *The Council postpone a decision on this until the evidence of use/need is received from CAWS.*

- iii. **Footway at West Hill:** It was noted that CAWS was raising an Area Board issue for a metro count to support the installation of a footway between the Pear Tree and Daisy Chain nursery in Whitley. The Clerk reported that this may have financial implications for the Council but details of usage, cost and the scope of the works were yet to be confirmed.
- b) **RHS event on 24<sup>th</sup> June:** Cllr Glover reported that this event would incur some costs for hire of the Assembly Hall & refreshments and proposed that this is split with over parties who have been invited to the event. **Recommended:** *The Clerk writes to Melksham Town Council and Melksham Gardeners' Society asking for a one third contribution to the event costs.*
- c) **Asbestos Removal at Shaw Village Hall:** The Clerk reported that following the asbestos survey a quotation has been received for £1,250 from A4 Asbestos to remove the asbestos containing materials. Replacement flooring would then need to be laid and although 2 quotes had been received, further quotes were being sourced as this is a non specialist service. Cllr Glover explained that a recommendation was needed regarding who pays for this work. Cllr Baines stated that the duty of care with regard to asbestos was with the owner (the Council) and asked whether the floor would be unusable after removal. This was confirmed by the Clerk. **Recommend:** *A4 Asbestos are contracted to remove the asbestos containing materials over the summer holiday period. The replacement floor decision would be made once a range of quotes has been received. The Council pays for both the removal of asbestos and making good of the floor.*
- d) **Valuation of Council owned buildings:** Cllr Glover reported that following the internal auditors advice, a quote had been received from Cunningham Lindsey (recommended by the insurance company) to value Shaw Village Hall and the new Sports Pavilion in Bowerhill amounting to £635.00 + VAT. **Recommended:** *The valuation is carried out by Cunningham Lindsey.*

- e) **Bloom in Melksham:** Cllr Glover reported that a request has been received from Bloom in Melksham to fund hanging baskets on the outside of Crown Chambers in the Market Place. Cllr Mills declared an interest in the item. The request was considered by the committee, but as the building was not owned by the Council, it was not in a position to proceed.

067/15

**Grant Applications made by the Parish Council:**

- a) **Defibrillators:** The Clerk reported that an application had been made under delegated powers to Melksham Area Board for a contribution of £3,212.50 towards 7 defibrillators across the Parish. Funds have been secured from Norrington Solar Farm, a Bowerhill resident's own fundraising (£750) as well as contributions from the Friends of Melksham Hospital and the Council. The Community Heartbeat Trust had also advised that funding may also be available from other sources eg Rotary Club and Woman's Institute. **Recommended:** *The Clerk represents the Council at the Area Board meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> June and requests are made to other organizations for funding.*
- b) **Local Youth Network Funding:** It was noted that there are funds available from the Local Youth Network for projects that support young people aged 13-19 and that the Youth Club could apply for funds to support its reformation in Bowerhill.
- c) **Community Benefit Funding:**
- i. **Roundponds Solar Farm:** It was noted that the £28,000 community benefit from this development is to be transferred directly into the Council's bank account.
  - ii. **Sandridge Solar Farm:** Following permission being granted for this development, the Clerk confirmed that £44,000/year will be given to the communities within a 2.75km radius of the site dependent on the number of houses as at the date of completion of the electric supply. It was noted that this would include the houses in the East of Melksham area.
  - iii. **Norrington Solar Farm:** The Clerk expressed concerns about relying on any funding from this project as there was a High Court judgement against the planning application.
  - iv. **Funding from the National Grid:** The Clerk advised that she had begun to explore if there was the potential for community benefit funding to come from the electrification works of the Railway line from the substation at Westlands Lane. A couple of informal discussions had taken place.
  - v. **CAWS funding award from the Southern Electric:** It was noted that CAWs have been awarded £3,000 from Southern Electric to improve community resilience which will fund camp beds, emergency blankets etc in the event of an emergency.

068/15 **Bowerhill Pavilion Handover:** Owing to the imminent handover of the new pavilion and scale of items to discuss, it was agreed that these discussions would be dealt with by the Sports Field Working Party. **Recommended:** *The Sports Field Working Party meets at 7pm on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> June following a site visit on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> June at 1pm.*

069/15 **Land at Berryfield:** It was noted that correspondence has been received from Trimac (Waterways) Ltd in relation to the Canal development. The letter sought answers to a number of questions about the ownership of the land and tax matters relating to the sale of the land. The Clerk reported that she had spoken to Mr Guley who had no intention of removing the use of the allotment land from the Council. The committee agreed that the best solution for both parties would be to transfer ownership of Council land to Mr Guley and vice versa. **Recommended:** *The Clerk seeks advice from the internal auditor in relation to the tax implications.*

Meeting closed at 10:27pm

Chairman 22nd June 2015